



NEWS from the Shelby County Mayor's Office

Lee Harris, Mayor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NOVEMBER 1, 2023

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THE OFFICE OF MAYOR LEE HARRIS PARTNERS WITH GREATER MEMPHIS CHAMBER TO HOST “LUNCH & LEARN” ON HOW LOCAL BUSINESSES CAN BREAK BARRIERS FOR JOB APPLICANTS WITH CRIMINAL BACKGROUNDS
Representatives from Shelby County human resources, re-entry, and pretrial services will discuss the process of reforming job applications and how businesses can hire individuals with criminal histories.

WHO: Senior Policy Advisor to Mayor Lee Harris Jerri Green, CIGNA Tri-South President and Greater Memphis Chamber representative John Webb, Shelby County Director of Human Resources Gerald Thornton, Shelby County Office of Re-entry Director Deandre Brown, Shelby County Pretrial Services Executive Director Llana Greer

WHAT: A virtual panel discussion on removing barriers to jobs for ex-felons

WHEN: 12:30 p.m., Thursday, November 2, 2023

WHERE: Zoom Webinar: <https://bit.ly/SCGLearnMore>

Shelby County, TN – On Thursday, November 2, 2023, The Office of Mayor Lee Harris, in partnership with the Greater Memphis Chamber will host a virtual “Lunch & Learn” panel. Attendees can learn how Shelby County has reformed its job application process and broke down the barriers individuals face in the job market.



In 2020, Shelby County passed a “Ban the Box” ordinance that removed questions about arrest or conviction histories from most county job applications. The county built on Ban the Box when they launched “Work to Break the Cycle,” a specialty job site that provides open positions for individuals with criminal histories. See more at <https://worktobreakthecycle.com/>

Due to these initiatives, Shelby County Government has hired over 150 people with adverse backgrounds over the past three years. Our goal is to reduce crime. Recidivism rates drop by more than 20% when formerly incarcerated individuals are employed. Shelby County Government is currently reviewing its job application requirements and implementing additional reforms to reduce barriers to residents who are seeking employment by removing driver’s license requirements from job applications. Shelby County Government hopes other businesses choose to follow this example.

End Of Release